

**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Shawn Verbeke, 30, of Cleveland, Ohio, was sentenced today on one count of conspiracy to distribute ecstasy and methamphetamine and one count of using and carrying a firearm during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime. United States District Judge Leonie M. Brinkema sentenced Verbeke to 130 months imprisonment.

Verbeke, a police officer with the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Police Department from 2000-2002, was also a member of a drug trafficking organization that distributed ecstasy and methamphetamine in Washington, D.C. and Northern Virginia. Night clubs in Washington D.C. were at the heart of this organization's drug trafficking. The defendant's position as a police officer enabled the organization to distribute drugs in these clubs with few competitors and minimal risk of getting caught. For instance, the defendant had an arrangement with co-conspirators in which the defendant would shake down rival drug dealers at these night clubs. The defendant displayed his police badge to the dealers in order to take their drugs and money, and then had the dealers removed from the clubs.

The defendant also used his position as a police officer to personally distribute drugs. On one occasion he arranged a methamphetamine deal in Washington, D.C., using his patrol car to pull over his drug customers under the pretense that it was a routine police traffic stop. The defendant was in full uniform and driving a marked police cruiser during this drug deal. He then distributed the methamphetamine to the customer using his police clip board, as if he was giving the customer a traffic ticket. The customer then attached the cash to the clip board to pay the defendant for the drugs.

United States Attorney Paul J. McNulty stated: "No one is above the law. This defendant betrayed his oath of office and violated the public trust. He has been justly punished for his transgression. However, it is important to note that the defendant's actions do not reflect on the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, whose officers demonstrate the highest level of professionalism and integrity while faithfully serving the community."

The investigation was conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration's Northern Virginia task forces and the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Police Department. The case was prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Jonathan Fahey.

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